

## STATE OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA

## CEREAL HARVEST FORECAST, 1955-56.

Reports on their harvest prospects have been received from 3,280 farmers representing 40% of the total area under crop, and the estimated acreages and yields set forth in this Bulletin are based on these reports. The following summary compares the 1955-56 estimate with the actual results for 1954-55 and the mean of the 10 years ended 1954-5:-

			<u>Estimated</u> <u>1955-56</u>	<u>Actual</u> <u>1954-55</u>	<u>Mean 10</u> <u>years to</u> <u>1954-55</u>
Wheat -	Area	Acres	1,640,000	1,689,103	1,924,034
	Yield	Bushels	29,500,000	31,462,737	28,997,901
	Average				
	Per Acre	Bushels	17.99	18.63	15.07
Barley -	Area	Acres	1,030,000	1,019,673	757,316
	Yield	Bushels	24,500,000	18,376,283	16,250,464
	Average	Bushels	23.79	18.02	21.46
	Per acre				
Oats -	Area	Acres	455,000	339,640	312,680
	Yield	Bushels	7,500,000	4,508,117	4,189,405
	Average				
	Per Acre	Bushels	16.48	13.27	13.40
Rain, April-Nov.	Inches		15.84	10.85	12.47

COMMENTS.

Seasonal Conditions: The average rainfall over the agricultural areas for the crop growing period April-November was 15.84 inches compared with the mean of 12.36 inches for the previous 50 years during which time this season's average has been exceeded only in 6 years, the maximum being 17.97 inches in 1916. The wheat yield per acre during each of the last 10 seasons has exceeded the mean yield of the last 50 years, but in only 5 of those 10 seasons has the rainfall exceeded the 50 years mean. For the 10 seasons as a whole, an average of 15.95 bushels of wheat per acre has been obtained from an average rainfall of 12.98 inches. During the previous 41 seasons, the respective figures were - wheat 10.66 bushels per acre and rainfall 12.30 inches. Although the rainfall for the past 10 seasons is only 5½% more than during the previous 41, the average wheat yield has increased by 50%.

Wheat: The estimated yield of 29,500,000 bushels is less than the actual yield of 31,462,737 bushels in 1954-55 but exceeds the mean of 28,997,901 for the previous 10 seasons. The estimated average yield of 17.99 bushels per acre was lower than in each of the previous 3 seasons but exceeds that of all seasons before 1952-53. The area under wheat for grain had fallen each year from 2,518,948 acres in 1946-47 to 1,528,377 acres in 1953-54, increased to 1,689,103 acres in 1954-55, but falls again to 1,640,000 acres for 1955-56.

Barley: The estimated yield of 24,500,000 bushels is considerably above the 1954-55 yield of 18,376,283 and the 10 year mean of 16,250,464 bushels but is below the maximum yield of 28,491,293 in 1953-54. The 1,121,744 acres harvested for grain that year, 1953-54, was a record also and the estimated area of 1,030,000 acres for 1955-56 is the next highest. The estimated average yield per acre is 23.79 bushels and has been exceeded in only 4 seasons. It exceeds the mean of 21.46 bushels for the previous 10 seasons.

Oats: The estimated yield of 7,500,000 bushels exceeds the previous record of 6,666,420 in 1952-53 and considerably exceeds the 10 year mean of 4,189,405 bushels. The estimated 455,000 acres harvested for grain is considerably in excess of the areas in recent seasons, though it was exceeded by the 472,545 acres harvested in 1940-41, but the average yield per acre that year was only 3.87 bushels. The estimated average yield for 1955-56 of 16.48 bushels has only been exceeded twice in recent years and is considerably higher than the mean of 13.40 bushels for the previous 10 years. Last autumn farmers had intimated that they intended to sow 923,000 acres with oats for all purposes (grain, hay and green feed) but the present returns indicate that only 830,000 acres were sown. This still exceeds the previous record of 816,418 acres in 1951-52.

Field Peas: The estimated yield of 525,000 bushels exceeds the previous record of 444,010 bushels in 1952-53 and the 1954-55 yield of 419,194 bushels. Prior to 1951-52 the area harvested for field peas averaged only about 15,000 acres per annum. The area for 1954-55 had increased to 32,280 acres and the estimate for this season is practically the same - 35,000 acres.

Hay: During recent years there have been decreased acreages cut for cereal hay, but there have been increased acreages of meadow hay and of improved pastures. The estimated area of wheaten, barley and oaten hay is 195,000 acres yielding 285,000 tons at an average of 1.46 tons per acre, compared with 203,915 acres, 257,227 tons, average 1.26 tons in 1954-55.

General: The combined yield of wheat, barley and oats was a record in 1952-53 with 66,486,793 bushels and the next highest was the 63,195,210 bushels in 1953-54. The estimated total yield for this season is 61,500,000 bushels.

The estimated combined yields of barley and oats exceeds the estimated yield of wheat for the second time, the previous occasion being in 1953-54.

The total estimated area of wheat, barley and oats for grain, hay and green fodder is estimated at 3,600,000 acres compared with 3,591,938 acres the previous season. The combined area has remained fairly consistent during the last 11 seasons. The maximum area was 5,293,882 acres in 1930-31 and the lowest in recent years was the 2,538,225 in 1943-44.

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